

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ASMARA 00101 091433Z

ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

ACDA-07 /086 W

-----091442Z 110261 /53

R 090535Z FEB 77

FM AMCONSUL ASMARA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4357

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

INFO AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON

COMNAVTELCOM WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN

COMIDEASTFOR

NAVCOMMUNIT ASMARA

NAVCOMMSTA NEA MAKRI

CNO WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ASMARA 0101

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, ET

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN KEREN AND THE WESTERN LOWLANDS

1. A EUROPEAN WHO RETURNED FROM KEREN ON FEB 4 REPORTED THAT WHILE THERE WERE NUMEROUS ETHIOPIAN TROOPS IN THE CITY, THERE WAS LITTLE TENSION AND NO HARRASSMENT OF THE CIVILIAN POPULATION. FURTHER, THERE WAS NO VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF DEMORALIZATION AMONG THE TROOPS SUCH AS THE HOISTING OF A WHITE FLAG AS WAS SEEN IN EARLY JANUARY. HE NOTED THAT SOME OF THE TROOPS ARE BEING AIRLIFTED BACK TO ASMARA AS THEIR PRESENCE IS APPARENTLY CAUSING AN EXCESSIVE LOGISTICAL BURDEN FOR THE AIR FORCE. THE FIGHTING AT THE ELABERET ESTATE (22KM ESE OF KEREN) WAS AUDIBLE IN KEREN, CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ASMARA 00101 091433Z

AND THERE WAS FIRING IN THE IMMEDIATE VICINITY OF KEREN EVERY NIGHT. PART OF THE CO VOY WHICH BROKE THROUGH TO KEREN IN NOVEMBER WAS TO TRANSPORT SUPPLIES TO THE EPMG GARRISONS IN THE WESTERN LOWLANDS. THESE SUPPLIES HAVE NOW BEEN OFF-LOADED AS THERE APPEARS TO BE NO POSSIBILITY THAT THEY CAN BE TRANSPORTED OVERLAND.

2. THE ETHIOPIAN GARRISONS IN AI COTA AND GOGNI, (60KM AND 30

KM RESPECTIVELY WEST OF BARENTU) WERE REPORTEDLY WITHDRAWN TO BARENTU IN EARLY FEBRUARY. IN AN OPERATION REMINISCENT OF THE ABANDONMENT OF ADI TECLESAN IN LATE NOVEMBER, 1976, IN ADDITION TO THE GARRISONS, THE ENTIRE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY WAS EVACUATED BY AIR. BEFORE DEPARTING, THE GOVERNMENT STOCKS OF FOOD WERE DISTRIBUTED TO THE POPULACE WHO WERE TOLD THAT THE EPMG AUTHORITIES WOULD NOT BE RETURNING FOR SOME TIME.

3. COMMENT: THE EVACUATION OF AI COTA AND GOGNI, WHICH WERE ORIGINALLY GARRISONED TO SECURE THE ROAD LINK FROM BARENTU TO TESSENNEY, WOULD APPEAR TO LEAVE THE EPMG FORCES IN THE TESSENNEY AREA IN AN INCREASINGLY PRECARIOUS POSITION. WHILE BARENTU IS KNOWN TO BE UNDER SOME PRESSURE FROM INSURGENTS, WE WOULD HAVE EXPECTED THE GARRISONS OF THESE TWO TOWNS TO HAVE BEEN TRANSFERRED TO TESSENNEY WHICH HAS APPEARED TO BE IN MUCH MORE IMMEDIATE NEED OF REINFORCEMENT.  
SLUTZ

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARMED FORCES, PROVINCE, COUNTERINSURGENCY, PUBLIC ATTITUDES  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 09-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1977ASMARA00101  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D770046-0464  
**Format:** TEL  
**From:** ASMARA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1977/newtext/t19770260/aaaacbbd.tel  
**Line Count:** 79  
**Litigation Code IDs:**  
**Litigation Codes:**  
**Litigation History:**  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Message ID:** 5da4acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Office:** ACTION AF  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Retention:** 0  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 07-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**SAS ID:** 3373764  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** SITUATION IN KEREN AND THE WESTERN LOWLANDS  
**TAGS:** PINS, ET  
**To:** STATE ADDIS ABABA  
**Type:** TE  
**vdkgvwkey:** odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS\_Docs/5da4acc9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc  
**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009